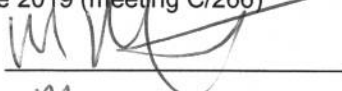


Use of Power Tools and Winches Policy (HS_P8)	
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Signed:	
Print name:	M. MASTER
Position:	Chairman
Reviewed: 21 st March 2019	Amendments: Inclusion of winches

Policy Statement

Identified and competent staff, and in some cases volunteers, may use power tools in conjunction with the Trust's work. However, only identified and competent staff may use winches. Power tools or winches owned or hired by the Trust may not be used outside the context of the Trust's work. Only power tools owned or hired by the Trust may be used on its nature reserves, unless written permission has been granted by the Nature Reserves Manager, and H&S requirements are complied with.

Volunteer Power Tool Use

- **Brushcutters and mowers:** The Trust will allow brushcutter and mower use at its discretion. Brushcutter users must be formally Lantra trained, or be trained and supervised by a member of staff or another volunteer with formal training.
- **Chainsaws:** Due to the dangerous nature of chainsaw use and tree felling, and level of formal training required, the Trust does not permit volunteer use of chainsaws on its reserves, other than where written permission has already been granted.
- **Winches:** Due to the dangerous nature of winch work, and its specified use as an aid for tree felling, volunteer use of winches is neither appropriate nor necessary, and therefore winches will only be used by trained members of staff.

In all circumstances, power tool use may only be allowed by a volunteer (for the avoidance of doubt, this excludes winches as per the above restriction) under the following circumstances:

- Permission has been granted by the Senior Reserves team
- Relevant training and recognised qualifications, where applicable, are obtained, and a formal certificate is stored centrally on file.
- The Trust has satisfied itself that use of the power tool is appropriate for the role and that it is being used safely.
- All Health and Safety records are kept up to date and Safe Working Procedures are complied with. These include:
 - A dynamic risk assessment is filled out logging the machinery number and use time, which is returned regularly to reserves administration.
 - Tool use complies with safe working procedures
 - Monthly maintenance is undertaken by the user, and recorded on the relevant form, returned regularly to reserves administration.
 - For power tools, the machinery is HAVs rated on an annual basis and duration of use is restricted in line with this.



**Herts and
Middlesex**

Grebe House
St Michael's Street
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL3 4SN

Tel: (01727) 858901
Email: info@hmwt.org
www.hertswildlifetrust.org.uk

Chief Executive: Lesley Davies



Hertfordshire & Middlesex
Wildlife Trust Limited is registered
in England No 816710 at the
above address and is registered
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239863. VAT No 366 9276 06

President
Sir Simon A Bowes Lyon, KCVO

- Tools are serviced professionally when needed.
- All ongoing training needs, such as recognised refresher courses are kept up to date.
- That the Trust's Occupational Health Advisor is satisfied that the individual has no medical condition which would preclude the use of power tools.

In circumstances where a volunteer keeps a tool at their house and uses it without staff supervision, completion and submission of dynamic risk assessments, compliance with SWPs and HAVs ratings, and completion and submission of monthly maintenance spreadsheets (when the tool has been used) are the responsibility of the volunteer.

Context

A power tool is a tool that is actuated by an additional power source and mechanism other than the solely manual labour used with hand tools. Power tools most commonly used by HMWT include vehicles, brushcutters, chainsaws and mowers, although a number of others may be used from time to time. Basic battery operated versions of hand tools, such as cordless drills and screwdrivers do not normally come within the context of this policy as long as they are not being used in a context where they can produce potential risks to health, such as Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (for example, drilling into masonry).

Power tools and winches are potentially very dangerous if used inappropriately, without relevant training or for too long a period of time. It is therefore essential that HMWT ensures that anyone using power tools and winches in conjunction with the Trust's work is safe and competent to do so and that all Safe Working Procedures are complied with at all times. It is also essential for HMWT staff to know when works are being carried out, so that they can ensure all our Health and Safety logs and systems are kept up to date. Volunteers play an important role in the Trust's nature reserve management work, particularly wardens, trainees and regular work party volunteers. An enormous amount of site management work can be achieved beyond that achievable just with paid staff. Often power tools are the safest and most appropriate tool for the job and it is important that, where appropriate, volunteers are able to use power tools.

Some power tools are potentially more dangerous than others and each require specific training. For some tools not requiring recognised qualifications, such as push along mowers, it may be acceptable for training to be carried out in-house and logged, prior to the task being carried out. Regular supervision should be carried out to ensure the trained individual is using the tool confidently and competently. However, for the majority of power tools regularly used by HMWT, such as chainsaws, recognised accredited courses and qualifications are required and must be successfully completed by anyone using such power tools in conjunction with the Trust's work. For some power tools internal training is adequate and a record of this training completed will be kept.

At its absolute discretion, the Trust may allow suitably trained and qualified individuals to use relevant power tools. Copies of relevant qualifications must be obtained and a record kept of permission authorised. Officers should satisfy themselves that the tool is being used safely and appropriately. This will normally involve observations. Possession of a qualification does not confer an automatic right to use a given tool in conjunction with Trust work. Refresher courses as appropriate should also be kept up to date. Staff responsible for named volunteers must ensure that records are kept of power tool use and all H&S systems are complied with.

This Policy also aims to ensure that the use of power tools has no detrimental impact upon the health of staff or volunteers, such as Hand and Arm Vibration Syndrome. Anyone using power tools will therefore need to complete an annual medical questionnaire to be reviewed in confidence by the Trust's Occupational Health Advisor, and will need to keep comprehensive records of the type of power tool used and duration of use.

Leaders of conservation activities where power tools are to be used will ensure that all volunteers present will be aware of the safe working practices and requirements.

Links to other HMWT policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other HMWT policies on reserve management issues and safe working practices.